

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of the claims will replace all prior versions, and listing, of claims in the application or previous response to office action:

1. (Currently Amended) A method for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component, ~~in particular of electrical components in a vehicle~~, comprising the steps of:

- generating a control signal by a microcontroller to actuating actuate a
load ~~via a microcontroller~~,
- amplifying the control signal;
- detecting actively a change in the switching state of a relevant load, and
- while the microcontroller is in a sleep mode detecting a disturbance of
said control signal by detecting a change in the amplified control signal through a wake-
up interrupt input of said microcontroller.
- ~~performing diagnostics irrespective of the instant of actuation of the~~
~~load by the microcontroller and/or by a superordinate control unit.~~

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 1, wherein ~~a diagnostic feedback is applied to an input for the wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller is~~ a non-maskable interrupt ~~as diagnostic readback port input~~.

4. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 1, wherein ~~switch-in or disconnection~~ turning on and off of a load is performed by a vehicle electrical system control unit, wherein a central locking motor ~~preferably being is~~ actuated as the load.

5. (Currently Amended) The method according to Claim 1, wherein diagnostic means are used to determine whether a fault state can be eliminated by the microcontroller,

wherein remedial action being initiated by a ~~superordinate~~system control unit if the microcontroller fails.

6. (Currently Amended) A device for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component in a circuit, ~~particularly of electrical components in a vehicle, comprising wherein~~
a load is connected to a microcontroller;
an amplifier having an input coupled to an output port of said microcontroller;
a load coupled to an output of said amplifier; for actuation, comprising and
means of for actively detecting a change in switching state of the load which are
designed to act, independently of the instant of active triggering of a microcontroller,
upon the microcontroller and/or a superordinate control unit of an output signal
generated by said amplifier, wherein said means for actively detecting a change are
coupled with an interrupt input of said microcontroller.

7. (Cancelled)

8. (Cancelled)

9. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 6, wherein ~~the additional hardware compared to known system is essentially combined in the microcontroller~~the means for actively detecting a change comprise a resistor network coupled between the output of the amplifier and a ground potential.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently Amended) A device for increasing the safety of operation of an electrical component, in particular of electrical components in a vehicle, comprising:

- a microcontroller for actuating a load via ~~a~~an amplifier~~microcontroller,~~

- means for detecting actively a change in the switching state of a relevant load, and

- wherein the microcontroller is operable to be put in a sleep mode and while in sleep mode detects a disturbance of said control signal which causes a change in the amplified control signal through a wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller.~~means for performing diagnostics irrespective of the instant of actuation of the load by the microcontroller and/or by a superordinate control unit.~~

12. (Cancelled)

13. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 11, wherein the wake-up interrupt input of said microcontroller is a diagnostic feedback is applied to an input~~for a non-maskable interrupt as diagnostic readback port input.~~

14. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 11, further comprising a vehicle electrical system control unit for ~~switch-in or disconnection~~ turning on and off of a load, and a central locking motor ~~preferably~~ being actuated as the load.

15. (Currently Amended) The device according to Claim 11, comprising a superordinate system control unit coupled with said means for performing diagnostic to determine whether a fault state can be eliminated by the microcontroller, wherein the system control unit is operable to initiate remedial action ~~being initiated by the superordinate control unit~~ if the microcontroller fails.

16. (NEW) The method according to Claim 1, wherein to eliminate a fault state upon detection of a disturbance, the microcontroller de-activates the load.

17. (NEW) The method according to Claim 16, wherein upon detection of a disturbance, the microcontroller is switched from a sleep mode into an active mode and resets said control signal.